



Wisconsin Forests at the Millennium

An Assessment © November 2000

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at the
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Wisconsin Forests at the Millennium: an Assessment

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Foreword

Wisconsin's forests are ecological, economic and social treasures. Wisconsin's forests provide the raw materials for the forest products industry and the setting for the recreation/tourism industry, both important elements of our State's economy. Our forests purify and maintain the quality of our abundant water resources and provide habitat for a wide array of plant and animal species, including threatened and endangered species. Our abundant forests also mitigate global warming and air pollution through carbon sequestration and oxygen production, and provide settings within which many of Wisconsin's citizens and visitors choose to live, work and recreate.

This statewide assessment of Wisconsin's forests highlights the fact that our forests are constantly changing. They have shown remarkable resilience in their recovery from the effects of the Cutover and subsequent fires that ended about 70 years ago. Our forests continue to expand and grow, becoming ever more valuable for an array of uses and benefits. With almost half of Wisconsin covered in forest, we are blessed with many opportunities to realize the full range of values from our forests.

Having completed this assessment, the DNR's Division of Forestry will now begin work to develop a Statewide Forest Plan. We will be reaching out to seek involvement in the planning process from the full range of those interested in and affected by the forests of the state. Given that every one of Wisconsin's more than five million citizens, and countless visitors to our state, are touched by our forests, we have a large task before us. The trends and issues outlined briefly in the last section of the assessment will, along with additional other issues identified during the planning process, become the basis of the Statewide Forest Plan.

The forests of Wisconsin have a rich history and a great future. I hope you will join us in celebrating the many benefits we receive from our forests and in working together to set a course for their future management and protection.



Gene Francisco
Wisconsin State Forester



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